ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, WESTMINSTER ROAD.

A church is now nearly completed, situated in York-street, Westminster-road, which claims attention on the score of novelty. The tower, a slender structure, stands at some little distance eastward from the body of the church, and is in a line with the houses in the New Cut. It will be connected with the church by means of a corridor or cloister, not yet built. Both the tower and the body of the church are of brick, but the upper story of the former has stone dressings, small shafts and arches on the face of it, coping, pinnacles, &c., and is surmounted by a stone spire, in the whole 135 feet high, from the ground. The main doorway too, is of stone. The church itself is spacious, being as we were informed on the spot 125 feet long and 56 feet wide, inside. It consists of a nave and aisles, separated by a range of lofty cast-iron columns of small diameter on each side, which carry semi-circular arches adorned with the "open-heart" and billet mouldings, executed in Martin's cement. There are galleries all round the church supported on cast-iron girders, rather cleverly arranged at the east end, there is a semi-circular absis with a lofty semi-circular arcade against the wall, corresponding with the main arches.

There are no windows in the absis, but there is a small opening filled with stained glass in the apex of the half dome that covers it. The church is lighted by semi-circular headed windows in the sides, and a rose window (the tracery of which is formed outside wholly of bricks) at the west end. The roof is open,—it consists of a common queen post truss, with small open brackets against the walls at each foot, and being of small scantling has rather a mean appearance. It is of deal, stained. The pews, pulpit, &c., are also of deal, varnished.

The style of the structure can hardly be characterised, but may be called Byzantine for want of a better term. It reminds the observer of some of the Rhine churches; like them it has small arcades on the outside running up the line of the gable. Although there is much that may be cavilled at by a rigid ecclesiologist, we cannot refuse praise to the architect, Mr. Rogers, for some skill and boldness. Mr. Wilson of the Borough is the builder.

DESIGNS FOR LAYING OUT THE PUBLIC PARKS AT MANCHESTER.

Our readers are aware that the committee for obtaining public parks and play-grounds, offered prizes for the best plans for laying out the grounds already purchased. Applicants were furnished with lithographed plans of the sites, levels, and instructions. From the latter we extract the following material portion:—

"The three sites to be laid out, are—No. 1. The Bradford property, containing about 31 acres; No. 2. The Hendham Hall property, containing about 30 acres; No. 3. The Lark Hill and Walness Vale property, containing about 31 acres. Nos. 2 and 3 are partially laid out and planted. The sum which the committee contemplate laying out in planting, fencing, draining, &c. &c. (including the provision of seats), for the three sites, is in all about 4,000*l*. This sum does not include the costs of lodges, for which, and for other erections, a sufficient sum will be provided. The committee, having but limited funds at their disposal, will be obliged to consider *facility* and *cheapness* of execution in their adjudication. Each plot must have play-grounds, with due appropriation for archery grounds, quoit, skittle, and ball alleys; a refreshment room, one or more fountains, retiring places, and sufficient lodges; and the places for these must appear on the plans. The houses on Nos. 2 and 3 will be used as refreshment rooms, and the outbuildings may possibly be rendered available for some of the games contemplated. The utmost regard must be paid to giving ample room for the promenading of large numbers of persons; and the designers must keep before them the practical usefulness of the scheme, remembering that they are sketching *a park* for the *public*, to be constantly accessible, and not a private pleasure-ground. A carriage drive round the parks would be desirable, but no carriage drive to intersect them. Footpaths or promenades will, of course, be suggested to the taste of the designers. * * Competitors desiring to append designs for lodges, &c. are at liberty to do so, should they think fit."

About thirty plans for each park were submitted, and these have been publicly exhibited at the Town Hall, the charge being one shilling each person for the two first days, sixpence the two next, and threepence for the two last.

The following observations are extracted from the *Manchester Guardian*:—

"Having had an opportunity of seeing the various plans about to be exhibited, we may offer a few general observations upon them, without the slighest desire to recommend or condemn any particular plan. As we have said, there are ninety different plans, thirty for each park, and these are numbered in the order of application, and, (for the reason stated) not consecutively. As to the estimates furnished with each, of the probable cost of carrying out these designs, they take a very wide range indeed, some being as low as 2,000*l*., and one as high as 9,800*l*.; the limit stated by the committee being 4,000*l*.

There must be considerable difficulty experienced, especially by non-professional persons, in coming to a decision in preference of any one plan or set of plans over the others, from the following amongst other reasons:—The plans are drawn to a great variety of scales; some are delineated in pencil or faint tracing, others in Indian ink, others again in Sepia tint, and some are coloured, and hence made exceedingly attractive to the general eye. While most of the plans are strictly ground plans, others represent trees, hedges, &c., in elevation; and in one or two instances we have very pretty birds'-eye views of the parks, shewing all their "alleys green," their groves, and arboure, in full and luxuriant verdure. Some of the plans seem to us very jejune performances, and in several instances, one great consideration seems to have been overlooked. About 30 acres being the average area of these parks, it becomes important to make the most of this extent of ground; to plan the walks so that as much space as possible should be gained within those limits. Hence straight lines, intersecting each other at right angles, should be avoided; and winding curves, or what are called "serpentines," seem naturally to suggest themselves. Yet, some of the plans look like the laying-out of the streets of a city, rather than the walks and places of exercise and sport in a park.

In one or two of the plans, artificial lakes are the chief features; in others, the fountains are made prominent objects; while in some, the planting is so close as to resemble a maze. Only one or two furnish elevations for lodges, refreshment rooms, shaded seats, &c. One point seems to us worthy of consideration,—the retaining in one or more of the parks in one place, a large extent of green sward, on which to congregate on particular occasions of festivity, a considerable number of persons for a short time, as, for instance, to hear a short address from the civic authorities, or an open air concert, or to witness some display or exhibition suited to the scene. Some of the plans have left some such space, especially in the Walness portion of Lark Hill park; others of the plans have filled up every portion of the area with walks and hedges, leaving only small patches of grass between the windings of the walks. Some of the plans resemble the figures seen in a kaleidoscope, all the curves being made to converge to a common centre; others again, retaining the centre, have radiating straight walls, somewhat like the spokes of a cart wheel. Some of the candidates have sketched their designs on the small lithographic plans issued by the committee, and it is much to be regretted that all the competing plans have not been drawn to one scale. When these variations have been duly allowed for, it appears not to be very difficult to reduce the number of plans to some eight or ten, and then it will require a little more care, circumspection, knowledge, and judgment, to make the final election. We presume that it is quite open to the committee to adopt a plan of each of three different competitors for one park, or even to combine in one plan such portions of several as may be deemed most suitable or desirable in carrying out the object in view, as expressed in the instructions issued by the committee."

New Books.

A Treatise on Painted Glass; shewing its applicability to every Style of Architecture. By James Ballantine. Chapman and Hall. London, 1845.

This very nice little book may be read by all with advantage, although it cannot be said to carry out the subject to the full extent of which it is capable. The chief point urged by the writer is, that while decorative art must be guided in her leading features by geometric proportions, she must also imitate in her details, the productions of Nature;—that Nature and art must go hand-in-hand in every artistic effort, or failure will be certain.

The writer objects to the imitation of bad ancient examples, simply because they are ancient:

"As if in penance for former transgressions, the national taste has prostrated itself before the spirit of antiquity, and is now offering it a homage at once abject and indiscriminating. This folly has been most injurious to several of the decorative arts, and to glass-painting in particular, in which the good, bad, and indifferent have been all copied, and repeated with equal fidelity and zeal. Several glass-painters have acquired an extensive and profitable reputation, simply by pandering to this vitiated taste, and by anticipating the effects of time in their imitations of antique glass. The consequence is, that, even in new churches, we find painted glass windows deformed with numerous black spots, in order to produce the required antique appearance; a deception somewhat akin to that practised by needy artists, and swindling picture-dealers, when they manufacture and sell smoke-dried imitations of Teniers and Rembrandt as genuine originals. Defective drawing, meagre design, and unskilful composition, have been laboriously copied, while, in order to stamp the work with the features of genuine antiquity, and to imitate the awkward workmanship of the old specimens, the pieces of glass have been purposely fractured, then clumsily soldered together.

Glass manufacturers, too, taking advantage of the prevalence of this ridiculous taste, have of late years realized large profits by imitating the sandy texture and wavy uneven surface of the old windows. In several recent instances, laboriously executed designs, replete with appropriate meaning, and carefully adapted in form and character to the architectural style of the edifice for which they were intended, have been set aside for servile transcripts from old windows of these stereotyped figures, the repetition of which saves the trouble of invention. In the department of painted glass, art has been decidedly retrograding; and should the public suddenly awaken to a sense of its folly, in admiring and encouraging the deformities thus perpetuated, there is a danger that the art may be left without support, when it may both require and deserve it."

He afterwards refers to some recent attempts to make the imitation of natural objects appear a minor part of ornamental composition, and endeavour to refute the assertion, that little more is required in this department of art than graceful geometric combinations of lines, and harmoniously balanced combinations of colours.

"The advocates of such opinions seem to forget, that harmonic proportion forms but the pedestal on which the triumphs of genius are to be exhibited—the foundations of the temple of art. They would substitute the alphabet of æsthetics for the alpha and omega of art, and having discovered that, by a systematic arrangement of colour and form, without reference to sympathy or association, it is quite possible to produce an agreeable effect, they forget, that while the artist seeks to please the eye, he ought also to address himself to the feelings and fancy of the spectator.

Man is not a creator, he is a mere adapter. The most wonderful inventions of modern times are based upon discoveries made by diligent observers of the operations of nature. Those specimens of art, which have been transmitted to us from a remote antiquity, excite pleasurable feelings, proportioned to their approximation to the beautiful in nature."

"If the greatest triumphs of art be felicitous imitations of nature, and if it be its chief aim to achieve such imitations—as who can doubt it is—why should we not have the walls and windows of our apartments decorated with

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